

ABRAHAM....II

(Genesis 13:1—18:15)

Abram and his nephew Lot had large flocks and herds. Their herdsmen quarreled, no doubt over water and grazing area. Abram saw the need to separate and offered Lot his choice of what direction to go. Lot chose to go to the Jordan Plain, pitching his tent toward the wicked city of Sodom. Abram moved to Hebron.

Some time later war broke out. Lot and his family were taken captive. When Abram learned of this he took 318 trained men and rescued Lot, recovering his family and possessions.

A man named Melchisedek, who was both a priest and King of Salem came to meet Abram. He gave Abram bread and wine along with a special blessing. Abram gave Melchisedek a tenth of what he had. (There is a very special significance to both this man and what he did, as explained later in the book of Hebrews).

In Genesis 15 God appeared to Abram in a vision, reassuring him of God's blessing. Abram was puzzled about the promise of future offspring—as he had no children. But God assured him that he would have children---even predicting what would later be the captivity in Egypt. Abraham believed God!

Sarai, knowing of God's promise, was sure that she would never be able to have children, so she wanted Abram to have a child by Hagar, her Egyptian maidservant. When Abram was 86 years old Hagar bore him a son, Ishmael.

Some 13 years later, when Abram was 99, God again appeared to Abram, renewing his covenant and promises. Abram's name was to be changed to Abraham. God instituted a new sign of his covenant with Abraham: every male was to be circumcised, beginning at 8 days old. In the future any uncircumcised male was to be cut off from God's people.

Sarai's name was also changed. She was to be called Sarah. God also promised that Sarah would have a son---who was to be named Isaac. The promises to Abraham were to be renewed for Isaac. (Abraham promptly had all his males circumcised. Abraham was circumcised at age 99.)

Genesis 18 records the visit of 3 men (angels) who announced that within a year Sarah would have a son----leading Sarah to laugh in disbelief. (When confronted she denied it...but she did laugh.)